

Notes and Observations

TERPNOMICTA TRIMACULATA (VILL.) (LEP.: GEOMETRIDAE): A SPECIES NEW TO THE BRITISH LIST, AND OTHER IMMIGRANT MOTHS IN PURBECK, DORSET IN 1978. — In a year which could boast little else of interest, it is worthwhile to note the following immigrant species to m.v. light in the neighbourhood of Stoborough near Wareham.

The morning of 14th June produced the greatest surprise in the form of a new species to the British list, the Geometer *Terpnomicta trimaculata* (Vill.), a male of which appeared in a Robinson trap run on the heath at the bottom of my garden. It was accompanied by several examples of *Agrotis ipsilon* (Hufn.) which had previously been seen only as scattered singletons, thus indicating an immigration. *T. trimaculata* is a native of Southern Europe where it is bivoltine, and the larva feeds on White Poplar.

Mid-October produced a considerable influx of immigrants, due to the arrival of a warm airflow from the Mediterranean area. The following more noteworthy species were taken in my trap at Stoborough: 10th October: *Mythimna vitellina* (Hüb.) (2), *Rhodometra sacraria* (L.) (1); 11th October: *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hüb.) (1), *R. sacraria* (4), *Uresiphita limbalis* (D. & S.) (1); 12th October: *M. vitellina* (1), *R. sacraria* (2); 13th October: *Orthonama obstipata* (F.) (1); 14th October: *Spodoptera littoralis* (Boisd.) (1), *Mythimna unipuncta* (Haw.) (1), *R. sacraria* (2), *O. obstipata* (1); 15th October: *R. sacraria* (1). In addition to these, there appeared numbers of the more usual immigrants, notably *Peridroma saucia* (Hüb.), *Nomophila noctuella* (D. & S.), and *Udea ferrugalis* (Hüb.).

Operation of a portable m.v. lamp with a sheet at nearby Furzebrook on the evening of the 11th produced a fine example of *Palpita unionalis* (Hüb.).

Since 15th October, stragglers of *sacraria*, *obstipata* and *vitellina* have occurred up to the date of writing (2nd November). Weather conditions are continuing mild, keeping hopes of further arrivals high. — B. G. WITHERS, 64 Furzebrook Road, Stoborough, Wareham, Dorset.

A NOTE ON *EREBIA EPIPHRON* KNOCH (MOUNTAIN RINGLET). — I had always assumed that this species did not occur below about 1,800ft. in the Lake District and 1,500ft. in the Scottish Highlands. At least that is what the text books say, and that tallies with my own experience. So I repeated the usual account in an Article which I wrote for this year's issue (Spring, 1978) of the Cumbria Natural History Report (which deals mainly — about 90% — with birds) concerning some problems of distribution. I subsequently had a letter from the Reverend G. Moule of St. Bees saying that he had known for 20 years of a colony in the Lake District at an altitude of only about 700ft. and that this colony was still flourishing. He

added that he hoped few lepidopterists knew of its location — I certainly do not — though he had originally reported it in the *Entomologist*. This must be most exceptional, and I should be glad to hear from any reader who knows of an established colony below the generally accepted lower altitudinal limit. It may turn out that we have too glibly gone on repeating the usual account of the matter. I say "established colony" because Mr. Moule goes on to say that he has seen specimens as low as 200ft., which he admits were almost certainly blown down from higher up the Fells. I have personally never encountered any specimens, blown or otherwise, below the normally accepted height, and I was very intrigued by this report.

I have now just had a letter from Mr. Chris Howarth of Whitehaven to say that he was climbing from Wastwater onto the Scafell range in mid-July this year (during the only really fine spell we have had in Cumbria apart from a few days at the end of May during the whole of this season) and was astonished to see specimens of *E. epiphron* flying at 200ft. by the shores of Wastwater. As he climbed up to the ridge he realised why, for specimens were spilling over from the plateau above where they were in such profusion that it was almost impossible not to tread on them. How I wish I had been there! I have never come across an outbreak of this species, and indeed had never heard anybody tell of one. I have always found its numbers quite constant. Wanderers are not infrequent in my experience but the specimens I have come across in this way have always managed to remain at a respectable altitude! It would be interesting to know whether other lepidopterists have had the same experience as I have, or whether they have come across specimens low down the Fells, or any similar outbreak. — THE REVEREND J. H. VINE-HALL, 3 The Green, Malmerby, Penrith, Cumbria.

EVIDENCE OF A LATE MIGRATION OF LEPIDOPTERA TO EASTBOURNE ON 2ND NOVEMBER 1978. — Noticing the warmth and closeness of the evening of the 2nd, I drove home to switch on my m.v. lamp at about 2000 hours. The prevailing wind was south-westerly and steady drizzle dampened my hopes. Next morning, inspection of the trap contents revealed: *Agrotis ipsilon* Hufn. (2), *Mythimna unipuncta* Haw. (2), *Peridroma porphyrea* D. & S. (1), and *Plusia gamma* L. (4), of which two had wingspans of 36mm. compared to 40-46mm. of normal specimens as cited by Meyrick (1927).

Among suspected immigrants at my garden light earlier in September and October, I had only singletons of *Leucania albipuncta* D. & S., *Peridroma porphyrea* and *Agrotis ipsilon*, with *Autographa gamma* L. and *Agrotis segetum* D. & S. in poor numbers compared with the previous three years. — MARK HADLEY, 7 Beverington Close, Eastbourne, Sussex.

MID OCTOBER MIGRANTS INTO CENTRAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE. — After a very lean year at the m.v. trap in my garden, I wish to record a *Heliothis armigera* (Hbn.) on the night of 12/13 October and a *Mythimna unipuncta* (Haw.) on the night of 13/14 October. Both were females and neither had